

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JAKARTA 11875 310915Z

ACTION EA-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1185

INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, ID

SUBJECT: LEGAL AID INSTITUTE HAILS GOVERNMENT PLAN FOR NEW
SECURITY LAW

1. THE LEGAL AID INSTITUTE (LBH) HAS APPLAUDED THE ANNOUNCEMENT BY COORDINATING MINISTER FOR POLITICAL AND SECURITY AFFAIRS GENERAL PANGGABEAN AUGUST29 THATTHE GOVERNMENT WAS NOW COLLECTING MATERIALS FOR THE PREPARATION OF A NEW BASIC LAW ON NATIONAL SECURITY. LBH SPOKESMAN ABDURAHMAN SALEH TOLD REPORTERS AUGUST 30 THAT HIS ORGANIZATION AND OTHERS HAVE LONG APPEALED FOR A NEW LAW, WHICH HE HOPED WOULD REPLACE THE PRESENT ANTI-SUBVERSION LAW AND THE PROVISIONS OF THE PENAL CODE MAKING "SPREADING HATRED" A SUBVERSIVE ACT PUNISHABLE BY IMPRISONMENT. HE SAID THE LBH NOTED PANGGABEAN'S STATEMENT THAT THE NEW LAW WOULD BE IN THE PEOPLE'S INTEREST, AND HOPED THAT THE LBH, THE INDONESIAN BAR ASSOCIATION AND OTHERS WHO HAVE LONG CONTENDED WITH THE PRESENT REGULATIONS WOULD HAVE A CHANCE TO PARTICIPATE IN DRAFTING THE NEW LAW.

2. LBH CHAIRMAN BUYUNG NASUTION HAD STATED DURING A

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PAGE 02 JAKARTA 11875 310915Z

PUBLIC LECTURE AUGUST 26 THAT THE PRESENT ANTI-SUBVERSION LAW INHERITED FROM THE SUKARNO REGIME IS ACTUALLY IN OPPOSITION TO THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE NEW ORDER ADMINISTRATION AND SHOULD BE REVOKED, A SENTIMENT SHARED BY MOST UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND MANY INTELLECTUALS IN INDONESIA. PRESIDENT SUHARTO MENTIONED THE NEED FOR A NEW SECURITY LAW IN HIS AUGUST 17 INDEPENDENCE DAY ADDRESS, BUT GAVE NO DE-

TAILS. PANGGABEAN, ASKED BY REPORTERS ABOUT REVOKING THE CURRENT ANTI-SUBVERSION STATUTE, REFUSED TO GIVE A DEFINITE ANSWER.

3. COMMENT: THE GOVERNMENT SUBMITTED A BASIC LAW ON NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY TO PARLIAMENT IN 1967-68 WHICH FAILED TO OVERCOME THE OPPOSITION OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES, AND IT APPEARS THAT THE PRESENTLY CONTEMPLATED LAW IS A REVIVAL OF THAT EARLIER DRAFT, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE REVISION OF THE ANTI-SUBVERSION LAW. FINAL PREPARATION OF THE NEW LAW MAY REQUIRE SEVERAL MONTHS, BUT PANGGABEAN HAS REMARKED THAT A PRIMARY TASK OF THE CABINET IN THE FIELD OF SECURITY POLICY IS THE PREPARATION OF SUCH A LAW, AND HE HAS APPOINTED THREE SENIOR ASSISTANTS (FOR NATIONAL SECURITY POLICY, INTERNAL POLICY, AND FOREIGN POLICY) THIS WEEK TO HELP HIM EXPAND HIS OWN ROLE IN THIS AND OTHER PREPARATIONS AT THE CABINET LEVEL.

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